



Embassy of the United States of America Bujumbura, Burundi

**Speech by Ambassador Dawn M. Liberi
On the Occasion of Earth Day 2013
Jardin Public
April 22, 2013**

It is a pleasure for me to be here with you today to mark Earth Day 2013. It is truly an event of importance for everyone, as we are all residents of this place we call Earth.

Thirty-three years ago today, 20 million Americans took to the streets, their neighborhood and on college campuses to demand that we stop the damage that we were inflicting to our home – to our mother Earth.

They demanded that we take action against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife.

Since then, that effort has become a worldwide movement as people around the world recognized that this is not a problem defined by political boundaries, economic fortunes, or cultural differences.

Governments have at last begun to take action and enact legislation to prevent more damage to the environment and public health. Developing effective policies to stem climate change is a top priority for President Obama administration. The U.S. has made substantial progress in reducing harmful greenhouse emissions in recent years and we are taking additional, strong executive action to address major polluting sources going forward. I know Burundi is doing the same.

Organizations like Action Ceinture Verte pour l'Environnement are working to make people aware of their responsibility to the planet and showing them ways they can make a difference. They are pushing governments to take action and holding them accountable.

And individuals, like you, are stepping forward to do your part to make wise choices about the products we use, to recycle products we can, and to protect the animals and plants that make up our natural world. Your actions today to keep this lovely Jardin Public a place that we all can enjoy is a small but important commitment to a better future.

The fight for a clean environment continues in a climate of increasing urgency, as the ravages of climate change become more manifest every day.

So today we can celebrate the progress we have made, but I urge you all to commit yourself to continue the fight to make every day Earth Day.

As they say in Kirundi: IMPINGA IRACARI NDENDE (There is still a long way to go).

Thank you.